



ABOUT ODHH

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) was established through enabling legislation (Chapter 537 of the Acts of the 2001 General Assembly).

ODHH advocates for and promotes the general welfare of individuals in Maryland who are deaf and hard of hearing. ODHH advocates for the adoption of public policies, regulations, and programs that will benefit deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

A 16-member advisory council, appointed by the Governor, advises and gives support to ODHH. The council meets four times a year, rotating in different regions of the State.

The ODHH has developed a five-year strategic plan, which has 10 key areas of focus - Access, Communications, Education, Health Care & Early Intervention, Judicial, Employment, Safety & Emergency Preparation, Information & Referral, Civic & Community Involvement, and Assistive Technology.



Martin O'Malley, Governor

Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

Yvonne M. Dunkle, Director



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DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

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MISSION

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) exists to provide expertise related to deaf and hard of hearing issues to Maryland citizens and to facilitate their ability to access resources and services.



VISION

ODHH believes that all Maryland citizens who are deaf or hard of hearing should have equal and full access to resources, services and opportunities for participation in all aspects of community life through the provision of appropriate accommodations.



PROGRAMS

Awareness Training and Technical Assistance

ODHH provides awareness training & technical assistance and consulting services to all levels of Maryland government.

Awareness training is designed to educate Maryland government about the diverse communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals by providing information about their specific needs. ODHH identifies the specific actions needed to improve accessibility for services and programs for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

ODHH provides technical assistance for communication accessibility. This includes the review of policies, procedures and practices to ensure the delivery of an effective communication services.

Constituent Services

ODHH serves as an information clearinghouse for the deaf and hard of hearing community to governmental departments and agencies as well as public & private entities that provide services in Maryland. ODHH acts as a liaison between the deaf and hard of hearing community and the Governor, General Assembly, and governmental departments & agencies in Maryland.

ODHH advocates for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. The office acts as a referral service for the deaf and hard of hearing community. ODHH also establishes a network through which services provided by State and federal programs serving deaf and hard of hearing individuals can be channeled.

Community Outreach and Education

ODHH facilitates community outreach and education through various activities, events and meetings to promote awareness of ODHH as a state resource on issues affecting deaf and hard of hearing individuals. This strengthens communication between ODHH and stakeholder communities. Outreach and education include presentations, provision of training workshops, and booth displays across the State of Maryland.



ODHH TOWN HALL MEETINGS

ODHH is mandated to hold at least two public town hall meetings each year to receive public comments on:

- Quality of state services and programs affecting deaf and hard of hearing individuals
- ODHH-related functions and operations
- Other issues that affect deaf and hard of hearing individuals, including ODHH responsibilities